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A BRIEF HISTORY OF

RIDGELY LODGE, NO. 74, I.O.O.F.

MANCHESTER, N. H.

1892

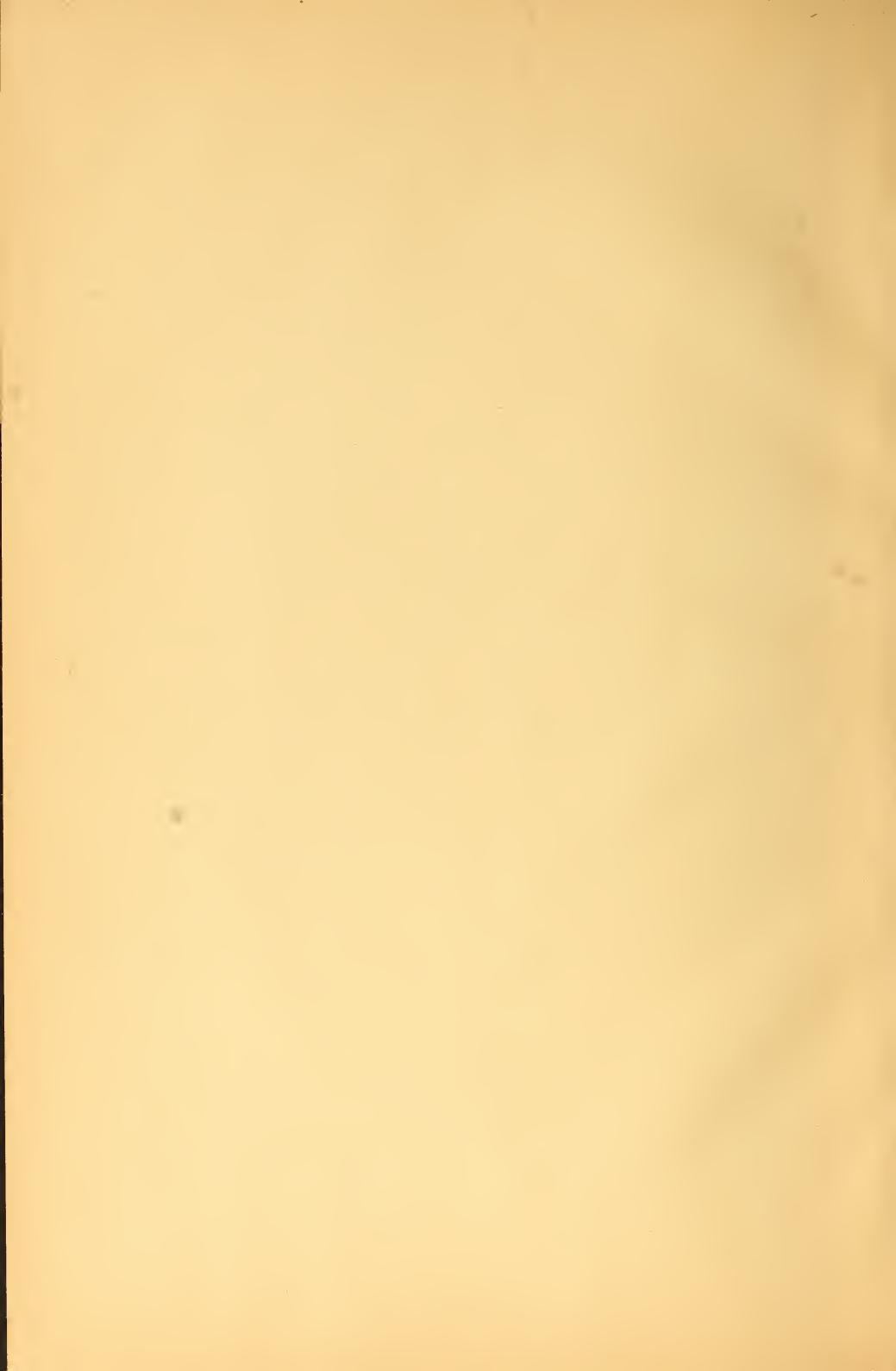
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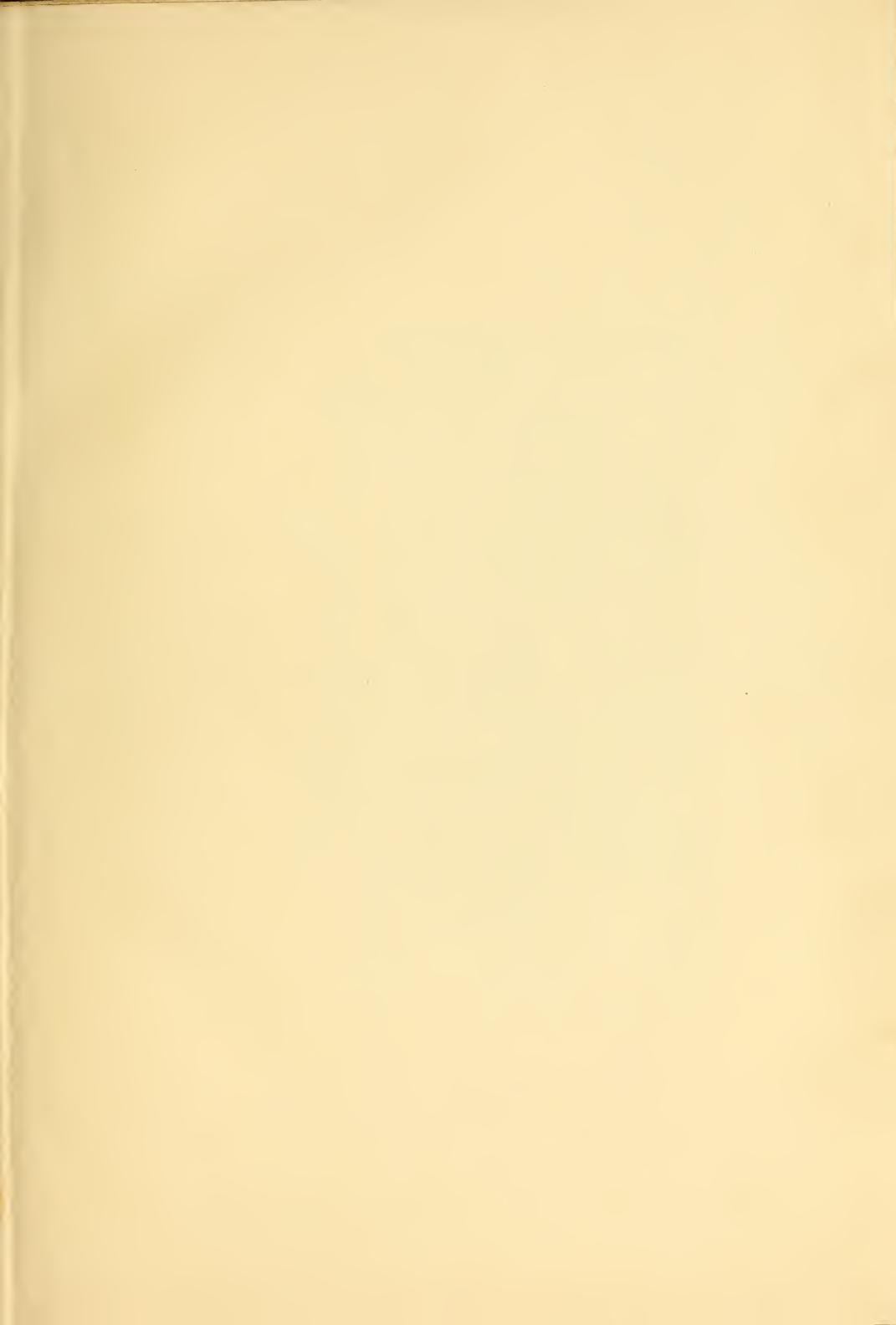
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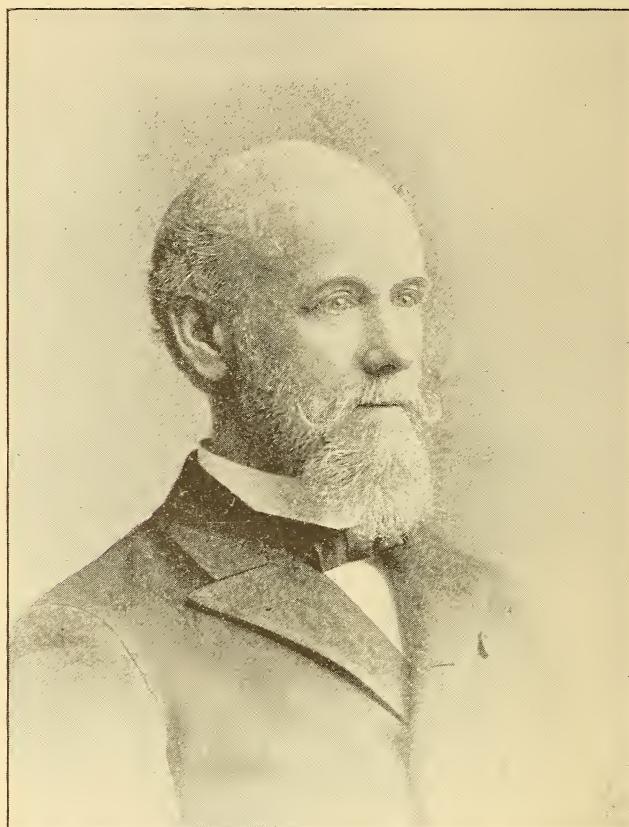
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.









JAMES A. FRACKER,
FIRST NOBLE GRAND OF RIDGELY LODGE.

∴ Souvenir ∴

A BRIEF HISTORY

OF

RIDGELY LODGE

No. 74, I. O. O. F.

MANCHESTER, N. H.

INCLUDING THE

FIRST ANNIVERSARY ADDRESS

DELIVERED FEBRUARY 17, 1888

AND

. THE HIGHER LIFE . . .

A POEM

DELIVERED AT THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY MEETING

FEBRUARY 19, 1892

. . . 1892 . . .

MANCHESTER, N. H.

PRINTED BY THE JOHN B. CLARKE COMPANY

1892

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MANCHESTER, N. H.

RIDGELY LODGE NO. 74, I. O. O. F.

The undersigned, a committee appointed for that purpose at a regular meeting of Ridgely Lodge, February 26, 1892, have prepared this little *brochure*, containing the first anniversary address and facts and statistics relating to the lodge from the date of its institution, February 17, 1887, to December 31, 1891; also a poem, "The Higher Life," dedicated by Past Grand James A. Fracker to Ridgely lodge, and delivered by him at its fifth anniversary meeting, February 19, 1892.

The vivid presentation of the development of universal love and brotherhood, the eloquent tributes to American Odd Fellowship, and to Wildey its founder and Ridgely its most accomplished and brilliant advocate, give to the poem more than local significance and render it of interest to members of the fraternity everywhere, while the facts and statistics relating to Ridgely lodge, now presented for the first time in a compact, convenient, and accessible form, will be of especial interest to its members and friends.

WILLIAM G. EVERETT.

THOMAS H. POWERS.

WILLIAM B. BURPEE.

FRED W. PILLSBURY.

FRANK T. E. RICHARDSON.

ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY MEETING,
FEBRUARY 17, 1888.

BY PAST GRAND JAMES A. FRACKER.

NOBLE GRAND, LADIES, AND GENTLEMEN :

To-day is the first anniversary of the institution of Ridgely lodge. One year ago it came into organized being. It was no puny infant calling attention to its advent by incoherent cries and frantic struggles,—awaking commiseration by its utter helplessness. Spurning the swaddling clothes of infancy it sprang forth in the full flush of vigorous life, assuming at once all the responsibilities of manhood, bringing to the performance of its duties on the very day of its institution a brilliancy and power as gratifying to its friends as they would have been mortifying to its enemies, if any it had. Fortunately, however, there were none who were not pleased to welcome it and wish the young stranger a long, a successful, and an honorable life.

The first lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows organized in this city was Hillsborough No. 2, instituted December 21, 1843; the second, Mechanics No. 13, instituted November 21, 1845; the third, Wildey No. 45, instituted August 8, 1866. For some time prior to the month of December, 1886, the expediency of organizing a new lodge had

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been under consideration by some of the prominent members of the Order. The interval between the institution of Mechanics and Wildey lodges was about twenty-one years, and nearly the same length of time had expired without the institution of another lodge. The existing lodges had prospered wonderfully ; they had overcome all opposing tendencies ; their membership was large ; their financial condition excellent ; they had become a power—a great power—for good, a beneficent agency whose worth no man could question. The infant in arms at the time Wildey lodge was instituted had grown to manhood ; a new generation had come upon the stage of action ; the population and wealth of our city had largely increased, and there was ample room for a new lodge and ample work, it was believed, for it to do.

A resolution was introduced in Hillsborough, Mechanics, and Wildey lodges and adopted by each of these lodges in December, 1886, granting the free use of their halls and paraphernalia for one year to any new lodge that might be instituted in this city. On the evening of December 29, 1886, a meeting of Odd Fellows interested in the establishment of a new lodge, called by Past Grand Master Henry A. Farrington of Wildey lodge, was held in the anteroom of this hall. This meeting was informal, no organization being effected, and after some discussion, brother Farrington presented for signatures, a paper stating the object proposed to be accomplished, the subscribers thereto agreeing to use their best efforts for the establishment of a new lodge, if the names of one hundred acceptable applicants for membership could be obtained. This paper was signed at that time by James A. Fracker, E. B. Aldrich, A. W. Glines, Norman H. Colby, and William G. Everett. It was understood that in the event of the requisite number of applicants being obtained, these parties were to withdraw from the lodges with which they were connected and form the nucleus of the membership of the new lodge. Brother Farrington and Past Grand John W. Mears of Hills-

borough lodge, also signed the paper, not as prospective charter members, but as aids to the enterprise, to which they pledged their active effort and support. How faithfully that pledge was kept most of you already know. They were indefatigable in their exertions, and the wise counsels which their experience and knowledge of the laws and usages of the Order enabled them to give, made them invaluable auxiliaries. December 30, brother Frank T. E. Richardson of Mechanics lodge added his name to the paper, and a canvass for the names of the one hundred acceptable applicants was commenced and vigorously prosecuted, most of the subscribers to the paper taking a copy and obtaining signatures. A few informal meetings were held in the office of brother Aldrich, the parties meeting to compare notes and exchange their lists of names, but for greater convenience the meetings were afterwards held in the anteroom of this hall.

January 25, 1887, ninety-four names had been obtained, and a permanent organization, until the new lodge should be constituted, was effected by the choice of brother Everett as chairman and brother Richardson as secretary. From this time on until the institution of the new lodge, accurate minutes of all the important business transacted at these primary meetings were taken, and have since been transferred by our secretary to the book which contains the record of the proceedings of our regular lodge meetings, forming an interesting and valuable prefatory record, accessible and permanent. It was at this meeting that Ridgely was adopted as the name of this lodge. The subject of a name for the new lodge came up for consideration; several names were suggested, none of which were entirely satisfactory, when the name of Ridgely was proposed — Ridgely, who with head and heart and hand, with tongue and pen and toil worthy of a Hercules, has done more than any other man to make Odd Fellowship what it is to-day — whose portrait with that of his great compeer, Wildey, gleaming from yonder

canvas, should be a perpetual inspiration, inciting us to follow, humbly though it be, in the path which he has trod. It was also voted at this meeting that the nominees for elective officers of the new lodge should be as follows: noble grand, James A. Fracker; vice grand, Alonzo W. Glines; secretary, Frank T. E. Richardson; treasurer, Norman H. Colby; trustee for three years, E. B. Aldrich; trustee for two years, William G. Everett; trustee for one year, James A. Fracker. The nominees for noble and vice grands were constituted a committee to take the necessary steps to procure a charter and, with the addition of the nominee for secretary, a committee on by-laws. We had undertaken this enterprise in the belief that five Odd Fellows in good standing constituted the minimum number required for the charter membership of a new lodge. The three lodges in this city had been very liberal, having generously offered us the free use of their halls and paraphernalia, and individual members had freely bestowed upon us encouragement and advice. Appreciating all this, and wishing to do nothing which would disturb these harmonious relations, having obtained what was thought to be the requisite number, we had studiously refrained from soliciting any of their members to unite their fortunes with the new lodge, and in a few instances applications from their members were discouraged. We had no desire to draw from their ranks,—to promote our gain by any loss of theirs. It was afterwards discovered that according to the revised constitution of the Grand Lodge the minimum number required for the charter membership of a new lodge in this city was fifteen. We were readily able, however, to obtain the additional number required without drawing from the Manchester lodges, and at a meeting held January 31, 1887, it was voted that the following names be added to the list of prospective charter members: Past Grand George A. Campbell, who subsequently occupied the station of past grand in the new lodge during the first term, Past Grand Master Luther F. McKinney, John W. Wells, John

Dowst, Fred F. Fisher, Herbert E. Lovell, A. M. Dunbar, James L. Brock, and H. L. Barrett. The name of George W. Nutter was subsequently added to this list and that of H. L. Barrett withdrawn. The secretary was authorized to procure a seal and all necessary books and papers for the use of the new lodge.

February 2, 1887, the petition to the Grand Lodge for the issuance of a warrant for the new lodge was presented to the meeting and signed by all the petitioners. At this meeting the chairman, Brother Everett, stated that nominations for elective officers had been made at a previous meeting, but as the number of applicants for the charter had since been largely increased, it seemed only proper that all of the applicants should have an opportunity to express their preferences and other nominations be made if it was desirable. On motion of brother L. F. McKinney it was unanimously voted that the action of the previous meeting in the selection of the nominees for elective officers of the lodge be confirmed. John Dowst received the nomination for trustee for one year, the name of the brother previously nominated for that position having been withdrawn. Many other meetings were held of which no special record was made, as the time was mainly occupied in scanning the lists of applicants. These lists were subjected to severe scrutiny, and all doubtful cases referred to investigating committees. Past Grand Master Farrington and Past Grands John W. Mears and George A. Whitney of Hillsborough lodge were present at most of these informal meetings, and were of great assistance in many ways. Grand Secretary Joseph Kidder was also a not infrequent attendant; his presence was always welcomed, especially when enlightenment on some obscure point was desired.

February 7, 1887, nearly one hundred and twenty applicants had been passed upon as suitable candidates for membership, and arrangements were so nearly perfected that it was voted that the institution of the new lodge should take place on the

17th of February, if that date would be acceptable to the grand officers, and that the grand master be so notified and requested to invite the whole board of grand officers to assist in the ceremony of institution. The nominee for noble grand was authorized to invite prominent members of the Order to be present at the ceremony, and Past Grand Master McKinney and Past Grands Mears and Whitney were constituted a committee to receive the grand officers and invited guests. It was also voted to invite the officers of Hillsborough, Mechanics, and Wildey lodges to participate with the new lodge in the work of initiating candidates after the institution of the new lodge and the installation of its officers, brother McKinney being appointed a committee to convey this invitation to Hillsborough and Mechanics lodges, and brother Farrington to Wildey lodge.

At two o'clock in the afternoon on the 17th day of February, 1887, the petitioners for the charter for the new lodge assembled in the anteroom, and, the grand master having taken the noble grand's chair, and the other grand officers their proper stations, the petitioners were introduced into the lodgeroom. The obligation was administered to the petitioners by the Grand Master, John A. Glidden; the grand secretary read the dispensation authorizing and empowering the petitioners for the charter, and their successors duly and legally elected, to constitute a lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows in the city of Manchester, to be known and hailed by the name and title of Ridgely Lodge No. 74, and after the usual ceremonies the deputy grand master proclaimed the lodge duly constituted. The nominees for elective officers were then elected and the applications of one hundred and eighteen candidates were presented by the grand secretary, balloted upon, and the candidates elected. The installation of the elective officers then proceeded in the usual manner, and all the appointed officers were duly installed.

The attendance at these exercises was large, and from the

close of the installation ceremony until seven o'clock the time was occupied by speeches from Grand Master John A. Glidden, Grand Warden Hermon F. Dane, Grand Secretary Joseph Kidder, Grand Chaplain Moses M. Burbank, Grand Herald Henry B. Horne, Past Grand Representative Henry A. Farrington, who had officiated as deputy grand master, Grand Guardian John W. Bourlet, Jr., Grand Representative Lewis Malvern, Past Grand Representatives McKinney, Leavitt, Robie, and other prominent members of the Order. A recess was then declared by the noble grand, and the grand officers and invited guests were tendered a banquet by the members of Ridgely lodge in the encampment hall above. The lodge reassembled at eight o'clock, and the necessary preliminary steps having been taken, the lodge was opened in the initiatory degree and the work of initiation commenced.

It had been proposed by the charter members that the new lodge should rely upon itself from the start, and initiate its own candidates immediately after its organization. In a letter received from the grand master he suggested that the three old lodges should each initiate one third of the candidates, leaving the new lodge a passive onlooker of the proceedings. This program was not entirely satisfactory, as we felt confident of our ability to perform the initiatory work in a creditable manner, but the generous offer of the free use of the hall and paraphernalia by the other lodges, the good wishes, encouragement, and assistance freely bestowed by some of their members, seemed to call for some complimentary recognition other than that which we had hitherto been able to offer, and with this in view the arrangement suggested by the grand master was modified in a manner satisfactory and pleasurable to all, by inviting Hillsborough, Mechanics, and Wildey lodges to unite with us in this ceremonial, the officers of each lodge to initiate about an equal number of the candidates who might be present to receive the initiatory degree. These invitations had been given and cordially accepted, and the program

was successfully carried out. Seventy-four candidates — the same number of candidates as there were then Odd Fellows' lodges in New Hampshire, and the same number as had that day been given to Ridgely lodge — were present to receive the degree. Hillsborough lodge was the first to commence the work, and was followed by Mechanics, Wildey, and Ridgely, each of the three older lodges taking a part of the number presented nearly through the initiatory work, and Ridgely lodge taking the remainder up to the point where the others had been left, and then taking all of the candidates through to the end of the degree. Never before in this jurisdiction, perhaps not anywhere, was the initiatory degree conferred upon so large a number of candidates at one time. The officers of the different lodges being brought into competition, each staff did its best, and the spectacle presented that night was one such as Manchester Odd Fellows had never before seen. You, Noble Grand, I know, and other officers and members, and all who were present on that occasion, will not soon forget it. It needs but a slight effort of the imagination to reproduce with startling distinctness the incidents of that scenic display. The officers of the several lodges marching in to the measured strains of the organ and taking their respective stations; the admission of the candidates; the silence, broken by the sympathetic tones of the conductors; the progress of the candidates through all the stages of the initiatory degree — the old, old story, old yet ever new and fresh in its effect on the impressible mind — all reappear with the vividness almost of reality itself. It was a grand spectacle: the four lodges joining in one grand ceremonial, uniting and binding each to the other in the bonds of fraternal union, never, I trust, to be broken. The work of all the lodges was the subject of favorable comment by the grand officers and others present, and the floor work of Ridgely lodge, which was arranged by Vice Grand Glines, was especially commended. The grand master in his report to the grand lodge refers to this

occasion as a "red letter day in the history of our Order in this state," and further says, "the floor work of the new lodge was commended in the highest manner, and the secret work and charges were clearly and impressively rendered." The initiatory ceremonies being concluded, brief addresses were made by the grand master and the grand secretary, other speakers following, and the lodge was closed about two o'clock A. M. On Friday and Saturday evenings, February 18 and 19, Ridgely lodge initiated thirty-nine more candidates, the night on each occasion being far spent before the lodge was closed. February 25 thirty additional applications for membership were received and referred to investigating committees. Most of these applicants were subsequently elected and initiated, and the first, second, and third degrees have been conferred upon all the initiates by Granite Degree Staff under the efficient management of Past Grand Charles W. Bailey of Wildey lodge.

At the close of the first term Ridgely lodge had initiated one hundred and fifty-four candidates, making with the fifteen charter members and two admitted by card, a total membership of one hundred and seventy-one, and had paid nothing for sick benefits or watching. The amount of dues paid to the grand lodge was \$165.65, a much larger amount than was ever before paid by any lodge in this jurisdiction at one time. The total membership of the lodge on the 31st day of December, 1887, was one hundred and seventy-six, and the total amount paid for watching and sick benefits to that date, \$200.50.

One other incident in the history of Ridgely lodge I will briefly refer to. Grand Representative Lewis Malvern, in his remarks following the institution of the lodge, spoke in eulogistic terms of the illustrious Ridgely and expressed the hope that in the near future the lodge would honor his memory by placing his portrait on the wall of the lodge-room. This suggestion was received with general favor, and soon afterwards, upon motion of our secretary, brother Frank T. E.

Richardson, a committee was appointed to procure the portrait and a suitable frame. The committee performed the duty assigned them, and on the evening of September 2, 1887, the portrait was unveiled by brother Frank W. Garland in the presence of a large assemblage, the exercises taking place immediately after the regular meeting of the lodge was closed, the public being admitted. The portrait was presented to the lodge in behalf of the committee by the sitting past grand, and accepted in behalf of the lodge by Past Grand Representative L. F. McKinney. An able and eloquent address, mainly devoted to the life-work and characteristics of Ridgely, was delivered by Grand Secretary Joseph Kidder, delightful music was furnished by the ladies' Rossini quartet, and the occasion was one of rare enjoyment to all who were present.

I have attempted to present without too much detail the salient facts relating to the organization of Ridgely lodge, omitting nothing important for an address of this kind, and presenting nothing that it seemed undesirable to refer to. The limit of time which I had proposed to occupy has been nearly reached, but I should do injustice to the secretary of the lodge, brother Richardson, did I not refer in commendatory terms to the faithful manner in which he has performed his arduous duties. It has been no child's play to organize and put into successful operation a new lodge with so large a membership as that with which Ridgely commenced its career. The amount of clerical labor alone has been very great, and most of this, of course, devolved upon the secretary, and has been accomplished only by the expenditure of a large amount of time and effort. In fact, from the moment the canvass for applicants for membership commenced to the present time, the officers and members who have been actively engaged in the work of the lodge have been diligent and efficient in the discharge of their duties.

Not the least pleasing of the experiences of the charter members was that of forming the acquaintance of Grand

Master John A. Glidden. As an agreeable and cultivated gentleman, a faithful and remarkably efficient officer, discharging the duties of his high position with rare tact and skill, the charter members of Ridgely lodge will always entertain for him feelings of warm friendship and regard.

And now, Noble Grand, has it paid? Have the charter members of Ridgely lodge and those who assisted them been recompensed for the time and effort to organize the lodge? Has the Order derived any substantial good — any pecuniary benefit — from its organization? In reply to these queries we can say that the effort made to increase the membership, promote the principles, and extend the influence of the Order has been in itself a substantial reward. There was pleasure in the doing. Only four of our charter members came from the lodges in this city. With our present membership of one hundred and seventy-six there has been a net gain to the Order here of one hundred and seventy-two members, equal no doubt in every way to a like number in any of the other lodges, and willing and ready to assume their just share of the responsibilities and work of the Order. This may be illustrated by the present composition of Granite Degree Staff. This staff is composed of members of all our local lodges. The membership of Ridgely lodge is only 14 per cent of the total membership of these four lodges; 37 per cent of the members of the staff working the first degree are Ridgely lodge members; of the second degree 30 per cent; of the third degree 46 per cent.

Just prior to the institution of Ridgely lodge, according to the official report of the grand secretary, the total membership of the three lodges in this city was one thousand and forty-eight; the cash investment of these lodges was \$41,-106.79. As an inducement to establish a new lodge these lodges gave what I understand was considered the equivalent of \$275, in granting the free use of their halls and paraphernalia for one year. Has there been any return for this in

addition to the heartfelt satisfaction arising from the performance of a kind and generous act? The attention of the public has been drawn to the Order to a greater extent than for years before. There has been a greatly increased interest in Odd Fellowship, not only in this city but elsewhere, and throughout the entire jurisdiction the Order has been incited to greater activity. The encampment branch of the Order in this city, whose membership was made up from the membership of the same lodges that made this grant of the free use of their halls and paraphernalia, have been large pecuniary gainers; they have gained in membership and receipts. Sixty-eight members of the new lodge are now members of the encampments. At \$10 each, the amount of the admission fee, Ridgely lodge members have paid to these encampments \$680; in addition to this there will be the annual dues at \$2 per member, amounting to \$136, as a constant yearly revenue. A considerable number of our members have also united with the Rebekah degree lodge, taking their wives with them. The Patriarchs Militant branch has also received accessions from our membership, to just what extent I am not able to state. Add to all this the percentage paid to the Grand Lodge, the charter fee, and donation to the New Hampshire Odd Fellows' home, and we have a total of over \$1,000 paid in cash by the new lodge and its members through various channels in support of the Order during the past year, in addition to our own lodge fund.

The prominent features in the history of this first year of the existence of Ridgely lodge, and some of my own personal impressions, have been presented in the full consciousness that this work might have been assigned to more competent hands; but the committee thought that the preparation and delivery of the first anniversary address before the lodge properly devolved upon the brother who was elected its first noble grand. Accepting the task as a duty, I have endeavored to perform it to your satisfaction.

MEMBERSHIP OFFICERS, STATISTICS, ETC.

The main facts in the history of Ridgely lodge during the first year of its existence are set forth in the foregoing address. The seventy-four candidates who received the initiatory degree in the evening of the day on which the lodge was instituted were,

Charles E. Atkins,	Charles H. Fish,	Fred W. Pillsbury,
James W. Barrett,	Leslie M. Folsom,	Ernest P. Philbrick,
Charles H. Barrett,	Frank W. Favor,	Jeff T. Perry,
Orra Burpee,	George A. Greenough,	Charles A. Perry,
George N. Burpee,	Frank W. Garland,	George E. Richards,
Charles O. Burbank,	Horace D. Gordon,	Josiah C. Rollins,
Rollin A. Baldwin,	Henry H. Hinkley,	Frank S. Robinson,
Luther C. Baldwin,	Fred Holt,	John W. Rowley,
Fred C. Baldwin,	Charles Hazen,	Lewis G. Spencer,
Henry A. Burns,	Frank A. Higgins,	Arthur B. Smith,
Charles E. Bartlett,	George F. Higgins,	Joseph Brodie Smith,
Winfred H. Bennett,	John J. Hanson,	George A. Stokes,
Harry E. Blake,	Clarence N. Hardy,	George L. Stearns,
Andrew B. Bunton,	George D. Jones,	Fred H. Thurston,
Charles E. Bisco,	Edwin F. Jones,	Lucien B. Tyler,
George E. Cassidy,	John M. Kendall,	Thomas R. Varick,
George A. Cann,	Byron M. Leavenworth,	Frank G. Walker,
Moses N. Colby,	Robert Leggett,	Clarence M. Woodbury,
Charles W. Cheney, Jr.,	James G. Lake,	John H. Wason,
Frank E. Durgin,	Frank C. Livingston,	Thomas J. Wyatt,
Frank L. Downs,	Frank T. McAllaster,	James S. Ward,
Loring W. Downs,	William T. Morgan,	Gilbert Wilbur,
George W. Dearborn,	Franklin W. McKinley,	John P. Young,
James Erskine,	James B. Newman,	Carl E. York.
Edgar W. Emerson,	Harry E. Parker,	

The forty-two names in the following list are the names of applicants who were also elected to membership on the day of the institution, but who received the initiatory degree at a later date:

John W. Abell,	Daniel Harley,	George L. Robinson,
Kirk C. Bartlett,	Charles H. Harvey,	Charles D. Robinson,
George E. Barnard,	Leander F. Humphrey,	William H. Russell,
Charles S. Brown,	John H. Jarvis,	Sam J. Smith,
E. Irvin Caswell,	Edward M. James,	Albert A. Smith,
Herbert J. Dick,	Charles H. Kimball,	James H. Smith,
George W. Eastman,	George A. Leighton,	Edward S. Stratton,
George H. Eastman,	A. John McKelvie,	Elmer J. Taylor,
Bartlett P. Elliott,	Henry H. Morse,	Harry E. Webster,
John C. Ferguson,	Edgar W. Poore,	Frank L. Way,
Henry Gray,	Willis C. Patten,	Malcolm C. Wilson,
Daniel R. Gilman,	Jesse B. Pattee,	Willard E. Whitehouse,
Hadley F. Higgins,	Almon C. Richardson,	Aaron F. Whittemore,
George P. Hodgkins,	Arastus S. Ray,	Milo B. Wilson.

Frank H. Challis and Charles S. Durgin were also elected to membership on same date as the above-named brothers, and admitted upon deposit of card.

The lodge adopted its first code of by-laws early in the first term, and it was soon afterward printed and distributed to the members. The tasteful and convenient arrangement of these by-laws was the subject of much favorable comment. Requests for sample copies were received from many lodges and members of the Order in this jurisdiction; also from Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Ohio, and California. The following extract from the Odd Fellows' department of the "Manchester Union" is one of several favorable notices of these by-laws by the press:

"We are in receipt of a copy of the by-laws of Ridgely Lodge No. 74, through the courtesy of Past Noble Grand James A. Fracker. As a specimen of neatness and accuracy in printing and binding the book has no superior, and in the way of arrangement of matter and the ease with which any

law may be found through a copious index and intelligible references, is exceedingly gratifying to one who has occasion to study its provisions. Following the title page is the petition for the warrant or dispensation under which the lodge was organized, signed by the fifteen charter members. On the list are the names of brother Fracker, Dr. E. B. Aldrich, Dr. George A. Campbell, brother Frank T. E. Richardson, John Dowst, and Hon. Luther F. McKinney. The third page is a fac-simile of the warrant, in miniature, and contains all the names of the charter members, also the names of Grand Master Glidden and Grand Secretary Kidder. It is a unique page, and forms an entirely new feature in the by-laws of the Order. The constitution is that furnished by the grand lodge of the state; but the by-laws are the work of Ridgely lodge, and exhibit great care and ingenuity in their construction. . . . The youngest lodge in the state has certainly the most attractive book of constitution and by-laws in the jurisdiction, and the provisions of the latter seem planned with a special eye to the comfort and protection of the members."

Early in the term ending June 30, 1888, Grand Master William O. Folsom visited Ridgely lodge and witnessed the working of the initiatory degree. He was much pleased with the manner in which the work was rendered, and soon afterward the lodge received from him an invitation to work the initiatory and first degrees at the fifth semi-annual session of the Grand Lodge of New Hampshire for the exemplification of the work, at Concord on the 18th of April, 1888. The invitation was accepted and the work of the lodge was heartily commended, as will appear from the following extract from an article written by Grand Secretary Joseph Kidder, and published in the "Manchester Union," April 23, 1888:

"The work performed at Concord on the 18th inst. was mostly of a model character. During a temporary cessation of active labor by Granite Degree Staff of Manchester, long so successful and popular, Ridgely lodge No. 74 improvised a staff in its own ranks to perform the needed work on its own members then in waiting for advancement. From the time of its charter, a little more than a year ago, it has enjoyed a high reputation for its beautiful and impressive initiatory ceremonies. Through this reputation, not less perhaps than personal knowledge, the grand master extended a cordial invitation to render this work at Concord; and to save

expense to the grand lodge and keep within the limits of the appropriation for the semi-annual, he made the further request that the members of the same lodge give a sample of their proficiency in the first degree. Both invitations were accepted, as substantially the same brothers would take parts in both performances, with what result those present had ample opportunity to know. The initiatory work was surely in the highest degree creditable to the lodge and to the Order in Manchester. The presentation reached a high standard and received hearty commendation. We are not to discriminate where all was so well given. The floor-work was especially fine and elicited applause. Warden Everett, Conductor Aldrich, Vice-Grand Glines, and Noble Grand Colby were at home in their parts, and gave great satisfaction. The latter was clear and accurate in explanation of the secret work, and performed his duties admirably under the trying circumstances. The past grand's charge, by brother Fracker, was a fine effort, and showed not only a clear comprehension of the text but a skill in rendition that only a few past grands possess unless they belong to the school of oratory.

In giving the first degree the members of Ridgely lodge gained fresh laurels. While there was strict conformity to the ritual, as there must ever be under our laws, yet the effects were intensified by new and important situations and movements on the floor, illuminated by some brilliant representations not before witnessed in the progress of the degree, making it all the more real and impressive. It was the very general opinion that the degree was never before so finely given in the presence of the grand officers. Ridgely lodge and the Order may well feel proud of its achievements at the fifth semi-annual exemplification of the work at Concord."

The anniversary meetings of the lodge have always been public and well attended, much interest being manifested in the exercises. The first anniversary address was given by Past Grand James A. Fracker; the second by brother Edwin F. Jones; the third by Past Grand Representative Luther F. McKinney; the fourth by Past Grand James A. Fracker, and at the fifth anniversary meeting the poem, "The Higher Life," hereinafter printed, was delivered in place of a set address.

LIST OF OFFICERS ELECTED SEMI-ANNUALLY.

RIDGELY LODGE.

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	NOBLE GRAND.	VICE GRAND.	SECRETARY.	TREASURER.
1887 — 1st Term.	James A. Fracker.....	Alonzo W. Glines.....	Frank T. E. Richardson.	Norman H. Colby.
2d Term.	Alonzo W. Glines.	Norman H. Colby.....	Frank T. E. Richardson.	William G. Everett.
1888 — 1st Term.	Norman H. Colby.....	William G. Everett.....	Frank T. E. Richardson.	Anneus M. Dunbar.
2d Term.	William G. Everett.....	Anneus M. Dunbar.....	Frank T. E. Richardson.	Herbert E. Lovell.
1889 — 1st Term.	Anneus M. Dunbar.....	Herbert E. Lovell.....	Frank T. E. Richardson.	James L. Brock.
2d Term.	Herbert E. Lovell.....	James L. Brock.....	William B. Burpee.....	Fred W. Pillsbury.
1890 — 1st Term.	James L. Brock.....	Fred W. Pillsbury.....	William B. Burpee.....	Frank T. E. Richardson.
2d Term.	Fred W. Pillsbury.....	Frank T. E. Richardson.	William B. Burpee.....	Edwin F. Eastman.
1891 — 1st Term.	Frank T. E. Richardson.	Edwin F. Eastman.....	William B. Burpee.....	George E. Richards.
2d Term.	Edwin F. Eastman.....	George E. Richards.....	William B. Burpee	Fred W. Pillsbury.
1892 — 1st Term.	William G. Everett.....	Thomas H. Powers	William B. Burpee.....	Fred W. Pillsbury.

TABLE, SHOWING THE GAIN IN MEMBERSHIP EACH TERM, AMOUNT PAID FOR RELIEF, ETC.

	1887.			1888.			1889.			1890.			1891.		
	June 30.	Dec. 31.	June 30.	Dec. 31.	June 30.	Dec. 31.	June 30.	Dec. 31.	June 30.	Dec. 31.	June 30.	Dec. 31.	June 30.	Dec. 31.	
Initiated	154	5	9	5	21	5	6	3	2c	7					
Admitted by card	2				2										
Suspended					4						1				
Deaths					2		1								
No. of members	171	176	185	190	207	212	217	220	239	246					
Brothers relieved		4	3	5	10	8	12	9	8	6					
Weeks of sickness		35	14	18	61	45	56	56	35	28					
Receipts	\$3,557.69	\$281.89	\$931.06	\$591.36	\$1,398.62	\$609.42	\$1,078.80	\$626.75	\$1,677.33	\$741.54					
Paid brothers		143.50	56.50	67.50	256.00	185.00	231.00	224.50	143.50	128.50					
Paid for watching		57.00	10.00			71.50	16.50	24.50	43.50	19.50					
Money and investments .	3,097.44	3,100.82	3,850.18	3,927.04	4,711.97	5,432.44	5,144.98	5,953.70	7,124.79	7,420.82					

From the foregoing statements it will be seen that the membership of the lodge December 31, 1891, was made up as follows:

Charter members.....	15
Initiations.....	235
Admissions by card.....	4
	—
	254
Suspensions	5
Deaths.....	3
	—
	8
Total.....	246

The total receipts to December 31, 1891, were....	\$11,884.46
Sick benefits paid.....	1,436.00
Paid for watching.....	242.50
Number of brothers relieved	65
Number of weeks of sickness.....	348

The lodge has also paid for burials, to families of brothers, and for other charities, \$209.

The record of Ridgely lodge for the first five years of its existence is probably unequaled by that of any other fraternal organization for the same length of time, in the state of New Hampshire, and perhaps anywhere. The membership is composed largely of young men of good standing, intelligent and energetic, and who have a just pride in their lodge and the Order, and there is good reason to anticipate for it a prosperous and brilliant future.

THE HIGHER LIFE.

A POEM

DEDICATED TO RIDGELY LODGE NO. 74, I. O. O. F.

DELIVERED AT THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY MEETING, FEBRUARY 19, 1892.

BY PAST GRAND JAMES A. FRACKER.

In a great city near a river wide,
A Rich Man dwelt 'mid scenes of pomp and pride.
A pillar of the church and of the state,
His lot was envied and his influence great.
With almost countless wealth at his command,
His bounty he dispensed with lavish hand.
He built a church,—a wonder and delight,
Its tall spire gleaming in the dizzy height.
A chime of bells put on, to advertise
His many Christian virtues to the skies,
That dwellers on the higher, heavenly plane

Might do him fitting honor when he came.
From love of Self, to win the world's applause,
He freely gave in many a noble cause,
And ne'er refused to grant substantial aid,
When from it fame or profit could be made.
And that was all. He never felt the thrill
Of Love or Pity all his being fill,
But coldly good, his first and foremost aim
To swell his fortune and prolong his fame,
Lived on, respected, honored, far and near,
His wealth and fame increasing year by year.

One summer night, by weighty cares oppressed,
The Rich Man sought his couch for needed rest.
His heart was heavy and his brain aflame,
The feverish pulses leaped in every vein.
Swift sped the summons, and from far and wide
Physicians hurried to the sick man's side.
Even while met in consultation there,
A Viewless Presence seemed to fill the air;
Impalpable yet real, with noiseless tread,
And 'ere the morning came the man was dead.
Freed from the grossness of this earthly clay,
He sought at once the realm of endless day.
Upward he soared until he neared the gate
Where angel guardians ever watch and wait.

Still nearer pressed, until to his surprise,
He found he had no power to further rise.
Vainly he struggled, put forth all his might
In futile effort to attain the height,
When suddenly with rapid downward flight,
Appeared an angel robed in spotless white;
A messenger from the heavenly land,
Holding a flaming sword in his right hand.
Speechless and motionless, with eyes upraised
The startled spirit on the angel gazed,
Who met his look of terror and surprise
With serenely sweet, compassionate eyes.

“’Tis vain,” the angel cried, “thou canst not share
The glories of the heavenly mansions there.
From the great wealth at thy command
’T was well for thee to give with open hand.
But nobler, holier still hadst been thy part,
If thou hadst given one coin with pitying heart.
Self-love alone,—if from it doth not spring
Wide love for all,—is an accursed thing.
’T was love of self restrained thy upward flight,
That held thee down from the ethereal height.
The chain of Self with which thy soul is bound
Must be thrown off ’ere joy and peace are found.
Each thought and act hath molded thee in part,
All that thou hast been makes thee what thou art.

Back, back to earth! Resume thy garb of clay,
The 'still, small voice' shall teach the better way;
Purge thee from worldly cant, from 'Levite pride
That passeth by upon the other side';
So shalt thou gain the sweet, exceeding peace,
And anxious care and every longing cease."
The humbled spirit listened; learned its fate
With abject mien and heart disconsolate;
Returned to earth, resumed the garb of clay,
To tread again life's hard and stony way.
It did seem hard: so near the heavenly shore,
Yet backward thrust by stern, unyielding law.

The years rolled on. Life's burdens still he bore,
But with them came a peace unknown before.
As from the dank, cold earth there springs to light,
A lovely flower, pure, fragrant, white,
So from the root of Self to light above,
Sprang the fair flower of Universal Love.
No longer by the Love of Self confined,
His sympathy went out to all mankind.
To those who needed most, the poor and old,
He freely gave his service and his gold;
With patient love and firmness, not with wrath,
Plead with the wand'rer from the better path,
Wiped from the orphan's eyes the sad, salt tears,

Enriching with a noble life the years,
Until once more he left the garb of clay,
And sought again the realm of endless day.
There seemed a nameless splendor in the air,
A strange and subtle sweetness everywhere,
As, upward borne by some mysterious law,
He neared the gate he failed to reach before.
He did not falter there. He found his might
More than sufficient to attain the height.

“Welcome!” the angel cried, “for now I see
The crowning grace that led thee on to me.
No longer bound by self-love’s narrow thrall
Thy heart respondeth to the needs of all.
This brightest gem, this crowning grace outweighs
All failures, all mistakes of other days;
All stains of sin and weakness, and all trace
Of inward shame and sorrow I efface.”
The crystal portal opened wide at last,
And through the gate the waiting spirit passed.

Unmindful of the world’s applause or blame,
Be true, O Odd Fellows, in act and name.
Do not forget while preaching brotherhood,
That all have sprung from one Eternal Good.
Strive for that crowning grace whose worth outweighs
All frailties, all mistakes of earthly ways;

Not with ambition for angelic light,
But for the love that makes the spirit bright.
True Odd Fellows in name and heart and deed,
Fraternity thy watchword, Love thy creed,
Forging the chain of Friendship, Truth, and Love,
Thou, too, shalt scale the heavenly height above;
Thou, too, shalt pass the crystal portal through,
And scenes Elysian open to thy view.
Odd-fellowship, it is to thee we sing,
Our choicest offerings to thine altars bring.
Truth in thy language, Justice in thy laws,
Thou pleadest well the heavenly master's cause.
Thy teachings and thy precepts wise impart
Strength to the brain, and courage to the heart;
We bless the temples to thy service raised,
Where man is happier made and God is praised,
Where Christian virtues all their graces lend,
And Friendship, Love, and Truth divinely blend.
Two names gleam forth from thy historic page,
Beloved by youth, the pride, the joy of age;
To Odd Fellows everywhere endeared,
More than all other names by them revered,
WILDEY and RIDGELY, in their time and place,
The noblest, truest, best of all the race.
Wildey the strong: the man of iron will,
With patient toil, rare tact, and matchless skill,

In this free land, by trial undismayed,
Deep the foundation of the Order laid.
Ridgely, a man of finer, milder type,
Of speech persuasive and a scholar ripe,
The trusted Sage, the captivating Youth,
The heart of honor and the tongue of truth,
His part fulfilling with consummate grace,
We scarce can give to him the second place.
Nor need we question which was first or last;
"Life's fitful fever o'er," its struggles past,
Like bright twin stars, whose pure, resplendent light
Draws our thought upward to the starry height,
Their memory and example prompt us ever
To wider range of thought and high endeavor.
With faith unshaken in the Eternal God,
Let us press onward in the path they trod;
With tongue and pen proclaim where'er we can,
The Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man.

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To all the friends now present at this meeting,
Ridgely lodge extends its kindest greeting.
And now would give, ere the moment has fled,
A thought to the shades of our own honored dead.
Is there one of us all whose heart doth not mourn
For the lingering clasp of a hand that is gone;

For a bright smile now vanished, a voice low and clear,
Falling softly and sweetly e'en now on the ear;
Like a sweet strain of music we cannot forget,
Which lingers unbidden in memory yet. . . . [sight,
Though the forms of these loved ones have faded from
Doubt not they are with us, in spirit, to-night.
To the absent a thought,—Where'er they may be,
Heav'n guard them and keep them from all danger free.
To our elder sister lodges, stanch and true,
Wildey, Mechanics, and Hillsborough, too,
Last but not least to Rebekah's daughters fair,
The far-famed Social lodge unequaled anywhere,
To each and to all this heart-felt wish we send,—
Long may they live, their influence never end;
Unfading in beauty, increasing in strength,
May they flourish, resplendent, a century's length.

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